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The Orthodox Herald

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Volume 46, No. 11 ISSUE 550 MARCH 1998

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THE LADDER AND ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

In the very first book of the Bible (Genesis 28:12, 13, 15) we read about a ladder: "... and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said 'I am the Lord God. I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.'"

On the fourth Sunday of Great Lent we again hear about the ladder. The church commemorates the memory of the famous saint and ascetic, St. John of the Ladder, who was the head of the monastery located on Mt. Sinai. We often see him referred to as St. John Climacus (of the Ladder), because of the book he wrote, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, a book of spiritual direction in which the way to spiritual perfection is compared to one ascending a ladder, each rung representing a virtue which must be acquired in order to continue the ascent higher and eventually to perfection.

Ikons depicting the ladder of divine ascent are very graphic. They show people trying to ascend the ladder and being pulled down by the devil. They also show people slipping and descending down a few rungs. These ikons are prevalent in Europe and make people more aware of St. John of the Ladder than we are in this country.

St John's book may be purchased from any of the seminary bookstores. It is read in monasteries during Great Lent. Although written for monks, it can be of use to all those seeking salvation, who sincerely desire spiritual guidance and a better understanding of self.

Here is a contemporary poem telling us that prayers are the stairs (rungs of the ladder) to God.

Prayers are the stairs
We must climb every day,
If we would reach God
There is no other way,
For we learn to know God
When we meet Him in prayer

(Continued on Page 63, Col. 1)



This metal cross once crowned a church in the Lemko-Galician region of southern Poland. There is much symbolism crafted into the cross. We see leaves sprouting from the main branches of the cross emphasizing John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches." The three stars on the end of the arms symbolize the eternal virginity of the Mother of God.

PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING OF LENT

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, hope of all dwellers on the earth and of those far away at sea, You have established these holy days of fasting by Your law and that of the prophets, as a way for the deadening of our sins and repentance.

In the fullness of time, You manifested Yourself in the flesh on this earth, and by Your fast of forty days and nights, You sanctified the practice of fasting and commanded us to follow Your example.

As a merciful and gracious God, enable us to begin this holy period of the Great Fast with perfect repentance, with humility rather than hypocrisy, with diligent prayer, with hunger and thirst, with frequent prostrations, and with a sorrowful heart. Enable us, also, to complete this time of the Great Fast, without fault and with a pure conscience, keeping our faith intact and achieving victory over sin.

Send us an angel of peace to watch over our lives, to protect us from all snares of our enemies, and to assist us in the performance of good deeds. Strengthen us by Your power so that we may accomplish the ascetic works of the Great Fast. Then with our passions bridled and our souls and bodies cleansed, we will be worthy to

(Continued on Page 63, Col. 1)

GREAT LENT

Great Lent starts on Monday, March 2. It is a season of fasting, penance, prayer and self-denial. It is a solemn season.

Our individual human psychology is a misty, treacherous, and uncertain world full of unruly instinct, falsehood and well-disciplined self-education. Great Lent is the time when good Christians seek God in a special way, diligently searching their heart that they may know God, come closer to Him and love Him better. It is a time to ponder the "mysteries of God" and apply the Gospel message given in Luke 2:52 that they may "advance in wisdom – and grace before God and Men." It is also the time when they meditate upon the bitter sufferings and death of the Saviour so that they may understand the seriousness of sin and better appreciate the price He paid for their redemption.

Year by year, the good Christian makes this sacred pilgrimage from Gethsemane to Calvary, not with worldly sentimentalism but with mystic realism. They go "up to Jerusalem" and "into the valley of shadow and death" with their Master, so that they may better appreciate the Pascha/Easter message: "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25.

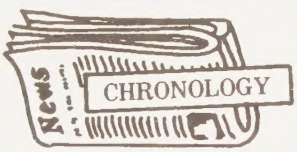
To help us achieve this end, the Church, during Lent, offers services which are more meaningful and eloquent. They are distinguished by moving hymns and prayers which were composed in the monastic cells of holy men like St. John Damascene, Cosmas of Maium, St. Andrew of Crete and others.

Services of Lent are the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, the Acafist to the Mother of God among others. They portray the unending spiritual combat against the flesh and the devil. In this battle strong armor is needed and this is one reason why the church summons us to enter into the House of God that She may fortify us for the holy contest.

We are entering upon a long campaign –

(Continued on Page 63, Col. 1)

THE ORTHODOX HERALD
(USPS 600-140)
(ISSN 0744-1495)
Published monthly by
The Orthodox Herald, Inc.
Transjurisdictional Publication
Special non-profit rate
Entered as Periodical-Class Mail at
Hunlock Creek, PA 18621 and Mahanoy
City, PA 17948 an additional mailing office.
Founders and Editors: V. Rev. W. Basil
Stroyen, M.A., Ph.D., D.D. and Nina Bohush
Stroyen, R.N., D.D., D. Litt
Phone 717-256-7232
Annual Subscription $7.00 a year.
$10.00 for two years.
Packet Plan Rate on Request
Address all correspondence to:
P.O. Box 9
Hunlock Creek, PA 18621
Contributions are tax deductible
Published since 1952



MARCH 1998

AN ORTHODOX ORPHANAGE in Guatemala needs clothing for 100 children between the age of 2 months to 7 years. Winter clothing is not needed, as the weather is spring-like. Send to TRANSCARGO MIAMI, L.C., Attn: Madre Ines, Hogar Rafael Ayau-Guatemala, 8554 NW 70th Street, Miami, FL 33166.

EVEN HERE Two monks were attacked in separate incidents at Mt. Athos monastic community. The assailants used axes. Police held a man who is a civilian worker at the mountain.

RUSSIAN GIFT OF LIFE, INC., PO Box 403, Sea Cliff, NY 11579 has brought 270 children from Russia and other former Soviet republics for heart surgery. $5,000 is needed to save one life. Volunteers provide services meeting parent and child at the airport, escorting them to the hospital, translating and hosting. During surgery they stay with the parents. Volunteers are not paid.

THE AMBER ROOM in a castle near St. Petersburg was a gift of Russian King Frederick William I to Czar Peter the Great in 1716. It was in Russian possession until 1941 when the Germans removed the room during a Wehrmacht invasion. It has not been seen since then. In May 1997 the first piece surfaced and an attempt was made to sell it for $2.5 million. The worth of the whole room has been estimated at $150 million in today's money.

IS CASUAL DRESS – such as jeans – OK to wear to church or synagogue? The question was asked of 1000 adults by the Lutheran Brotherhood. Sixty-four percent say it is acceptable to wear casual dress to religious services. City dwellers were more likely than small-town residents to give their blessing to casual dress at church.

TWO CANONS AND A CANTICLE translated from Russian to St. Xenia of St. Petersburg have been printed into a 44-page booklet. A 68-minute cassette, chanted by the nuns of Holy Nativity Convent, has been recorded. Book is $5.50. Tape is $11. Both are $15.50 from Tabor Press, PO Box 470842, Brookline, MA 02147-0842. For more info call 1-800-227-1629.

ST. HERMAN'S HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY, 4410 Franklin Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44113 has celebrated its 20th anniversary. Their goal has been to meet the basic needs of men, women with children, elderly and families with meals, showers, clothing and food bags; they prepare many of them to go to work, get help with rent, go to clinics and hospital appointments, job interviews, bus fare for AA meetings, etc.

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT interned 8,579 enemy aliens made up mostly of Ukrainians and Carpatho-Russians into 24 concentration camps across the country from 1914-1920. Some 88,000 were classified as "enemy aliens" and were not interned but were required to report regularly to the officials. Children were interned along with their parents, some for as long as 6 years. Seven plaques commemorating the unjust internment have been placed at the sites of the concentration camps.

AMERICAN-STYLE RELIGIOUS PLURALISM is under official attack in much of Europe – including several western European nations considered bastions of democratic freedom. While American attention has largely been focused on Russia's recent approval of law regulating religious expression, there are literally hundreds of religious minorities discriminated against or persecuted in Western Europe. Germany, France, Belgium and Switzerland have restrictive laws.

WOODEN CHURCHES in the vicinity of Bardejov (Slovakia) is a book just released in Slovakia. It can be purchased for $22.50 from Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, 7380 SW 86 Lane, Ocala, FL 34476-7006. We tried to purchase a copy of this book while in Slovakia after seeing one of our tour members, Mary Bakaletz, with a copy. The book captures the elegance of Rusyn wooden church architecture and the beauty of Eastern icons. There are 63 full color photos. The 192 pages are in three languages – Slovak, English and German. The style of the icons in the Carpathian area is different. You can see that illustrated here.

ORTHODOX CASSETTE PROJECT. Full sets of 26 cassettes, keyed to the Sundays of the year, are still available for $130. The readings are in English, the music is sung in Slavonic by the best choirs in the world. A recent letter said: "I got a cassette player for Christmas from my son. Now, I hope I can hear all that beautiful music from my childhood, for now I seldom hear it."

WHAT A GIFT! Order 24 issues of The Orthodox Herald – a 2 year subscription for only $10. A friend, family member, or church member would be most grateful to you.

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A Straight Path

Tolstoy wrote about Christ's commandments in the Sermon on the Mount and the extreme difficulty of living up to them. "I do not fulfill a ten thousandth part, it is true, and I am to blame for that...Blame me – I do that myself – but blame me and not the path I tread...If I know the road home and go along it drunk, staggering from side to side – does that make the road along which I go wrong?"

Tolstoy's picture of himself zigzagging along the right road is a more accurate picture of the average Christian than the average Christian might like to admit. But there is no sign of pride, no sign of self-satisfaction, absolutely no sign of feeling superior to others; just a consciousness of having one's feet on the right road, and a humble recognition that one is not making as good progress along it as one should.

* * * * * *

Light Moment

It's not as easy as you think to get a parking ticket in town. First, you have to find a parking place.

•Prayer at the Beginning of Lent

partake without condemnation, of Your most pure Body and Your most precious and life-giving Blood.

For You are the merciful and gracious lover of mankind Who has come to save all, and to You we render glory, together with Your Eternal Father, and Your all Holy, Good, and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

•The Ladder and St. John Climacus

And ask Him to lighten
Our burden of care–
So start in the morning
And, though the way's steep,
Climb ever upward
'Til your eyes close in sleep–
For prayers are the stairs
That lead to the Lord,
And to meet Him in prayer
Is the climber's reward.

• Great Lent

forty days of battle. Prayers and hymns full of meaning for us find dramatic expression in appropriate rites and ceremonies, humble prostrations and somber melodies, so that the whole person, so strongly influenced by external forces, will be strengthened.

WINTER'S GRACE

If Christ found it necessary to take forty days in the wilderness – to retreat into the innermost recesses of His own being – who are we to say that Lent is not for us?

"For everything there is a season, a time for purpose under heaven." (Ecc. 3:1) There is a time to "go to the mall" if you wish. And there is a time, namely Lent, to go into the wilderness with Christ. The time has come on March 2 when the church teaches us to fast, (Matt 6:16) to pray more often, to do good deeds and to attend more often.

Time, a bit of it, is what is given us; in which not only to savor the wonderful sights, and sounds, and stories which make up our Father's world, but also to learn the presence of the God Who is beyond our sight and sound and even story.

What are you going to do with this time?

Most of us have a job and a family and a hundred different engagements. Therefore, we must all find the wilderness close by. Here is a short, incomplete list of shortcuts to the wilderness:

1. A time for daily prayer and meditation, reserved at least as firmly as we schedule meals and ablutions. For some it must be done while doing something else, such as dishwashing or driving the car. But prayerful people always find the time!

2. A religious book, which we find intriguing, about man and God, for browsing; to pick up from time to time in the kitchen, den or even the car while you are waiting for someone or an appointment, which will start thoughts going, and give you something to pray about in your own words.

3. Visits to open churches, for a short time, as we go by. If you find the kind which has an open door and the flicker of the presence lamp, the glow of the embers of other people's worshipping in the same place earlier you are most fortunate.

4. Visits to the hospital, a nursing home or to a shut-in, or where there is anyone young or old who is nearer to the time frontier than you are. These are not so much for the good you may do, but for the good they will do for you.

Make your own list or add to this one. Take this time to go into the wilderness with Christ.

AN ICON OF THE KINGDOM!

March 8 is the First Sunday of Lent, is called **the Sunday of Orthodoxy.** Having begun the effort of fasting, we want to affirm the truths of the Faith, which sustain us in our endeavours. On this day in particular we celebrate the defeat of the last of the major heresies faced by the Orthodox Faith - that of **iconoclasm** (literally icon-smashing). Today it sound strange that at one time people would go as far as to die for their conviction as to whether there should or should not be icons in Churches. It seems to us to be a matter of taste, a question of what sort of decorations we like in Church. But it was a much more serious matter that was debated.

Those who opposed icons maintained that icons were really **idols** - things that people worship in place of God. An icon is intended to be a material representation of a spiritual reality that helps people connect to that reality more readily. The icon-smashers maintained that it is not really **possible** to make an icon - that everything that seems to be an icon is in reality an idol, an offense to God.

The **iconodules,** those who honoured icons, won the day by focusing on a central truth of the Faith of Christians: we believe that **God Himself** used matter to connect with us, and connect us with Him when Jesus came into the world. We believe that Jesus is **really God** and **really human** at one and the same time. This faith leads us to many important conclusions. Since God united Himself with matter when God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, became a human being (without ceasing to be God as well) this means that the world itself is an Icon of God's Eternal Kingdom. As we honour and cherish God's creation, we honour **Him** and show our love and devotion to Him. A most important truth indeed - one which our forefathers did well to preserve even at the cost of their lives! Ought we do less?

The Very Rev'd Dr. Ihor George Kutash

OUT OF DATE

Technology has entered many of our homes. Almost everyone has a TV on which they may watch worship services of various denominations. We see people sitting comfortably in cushion-lined seats, clapping and laughing. We contrast this with our Orthodox church behaviour and, being weak, we may wonder whether we are out of date.

Some people think that going to a church service is not much different than going to a music concert or even a concert of one of the groups where beat drives the emotions.

There, however, are many differences. You don't have to purchase a ticket to get into the church. No popcorn is allowed. Most significantly, the purpose of the Orthodox services are not for entertainment.

That's where a lot of non-Orthodox, especially those which can be seen on TV, have a different idea than Orthodox. They seem to think that services should be for their sakes - to excite, enthrall and entertain. The central reason for gathering, which is to worship God, seems to be forgotten or ignored. The focus in the Orthodox liturgy is on God, rather than ourselves.

Worship is not meant to please us, to make us feel good, to meet our criteria, our standards, our tastes. Worship is for God! We are not to be the center of worship. God is to be at the center.

We have to be careful not to be influenced by the non-Orthodox view and to be vigilant that these practices do not enter our church.

* * * * * *

The smallest light is seen in the darkest night.

WEEKLY MEDITATIONS

Praying the Beatitudes Series

March 1 - Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

O Jesus, Son of the all-merciful Father, when You came to earth, You took on our mortal nature and raised it to the heights of heaven. You instructed us to be kind and loving toward all Your children. You desire that we practice mercy even in a simple and humble way. Now, O Lord, anoint our hearts and souls with the oil of gladness that we may obtain Your grace. Renew our faith and trust in You, the Living God. Come and make Your dwelling within us. May others see Your love in our acts of kindness, and be drawn to You, the Author and Designer of all things. O Christ our Guide and Teacher, look with Your all-merciful eyes upon the request of Your servants and have mercy.

March 8 - Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

O Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, our hearts are restless, and will not be at rest until they find refuge in You. Preserve us in holiness throughout the remainder of our earthly life. May our days be spent in peace and without sin. Help us to trust in Your providence and holy will. Create a pure heart within us, O God, and put a right spirit within us. Do not cast us away from Your presence, but grant that we may see You in the never-ending day of Your kingdom. O most kind Lord, hear our heartfelt prayer and have mercy on us.

March 15 - Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

O only-begotten Son of God, Lord Jesus Christ, You came into the world, so that we may become children of God. After Your resurrection from the dead, You granted "Peace" to the apostles when the doors were shut; come now to our hearts and souls that have been closed by sin. May we be Your instrument of peace and reconciliation between those who wage war upon the human spirit. Unite families that have been broken by misunderstanding and mistrust. Let all Your children from the far reaches of the earth recognize Your lordship. In peace, we pray to You, O Lord, and have mercy on us.

March 22 - Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Be close to those who are persecuted for Your sake, O Christ our True God, and grant them solace and the joy of Your salvation. Empower them with the grace to confess Your most honored and sublime Name before all people they meet today. Forgive their persecutors. May the courage of Your holy martyrs convert even the hard hearts of those who do not recognize You in the heart of every believer. May those who have suffered on Your account, be welcomed into the Kingdom of heaven prepared for all those who love You. May their example of courage bring stability and holiness to our lives. Incline Your ear to us, O Eternal Word, and have mercy on us.

March 29 - Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.

O Jesus, our only sure hope, when we are reviled in Your Name, do not let evil overcome our hearts. When we are cursed, let us conquer with goodness. When we are ridiculed, teach us to bless. When ill is spoken of us, may our tongue sing out praise. When people take advantage of us, let us never reciprocate with vengeance. When we are hated because of our belief in You, let our prayer be of forgiveness and love. When others speak lies about us, let truth be our shield. When we are persecuted for Your sake, do not allow our hearts to become cold with hatred for our persecutors. When we are robbed of our dignity, let us surrender our lives completely to You. When we are at the end of our earthly life, pardon our sins and have mercy on us.

Raymond Mastroberte
Iconographer

MISSION AND ALASKA FUND

A literature ministry is possible with your help: **Peter and Vera Croitoru,** John Russian, Dcn. Alex Krafchak, **Anne Wentovich,** Anne Krawetz, Nikolaj Karpowitsch, Patricia Pavelchak, Apollo and Elizabeth Manchuk in memory of Manchuk and Mamchur Families, Mary Wasylko, Ethel Watlock, Mildred Kubanicz, **Helen Nowosadko,** Eugene Danko, Pauline Petronek, Ruth Morris. A.M. Fedec in memory of grandparents, Joseph and Anna Boris. Sis Albers in memory of Fr. Peter Kreta and Geneveve Casavant. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Blonsky in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Wasil Gamble, Father Basil and Matushka Gamble, John and Anna Dorunda.

* * * * * *

"Why should I trust you? We haven't eaten cabbage soup from the same bowl."

Dabs of Thoughts

O God, I am closing this day with a Short examination of conscience and a prayer for forgiveness. I am sorry for my sins and failings. If I do not acknowledge these, there will be little chance for improvement. Looking back, seeing my sins, I feel like disappearing into oblivion. Regrettable words, impetuous acts, blind pride – O, Lord, how patient You are with me, and how utterly forgiving. Thank You for the opportunity for a new start. Amen.

The beginning of wisdom is the realization that the thing you are anxious about today won't seem important tomorrow.

The Church is not composed of people who are better than the rest, but of people who are trying to be better than they are; not of people who are perfect, but of people who are dissatisfied with their imperfection.

A sanctuary is a place separated or set apart. In the Orthodox Church the term "sanctuary" refers to the area behind the ikonastas. In Protestant terminology the word "sanctuary" is sometimes used to include the entire church where services are held.

St. Symeon advised choir directors or psalmists: If they ask you to act as the director of the choir, do not act carelessly and lazily, but thoughtfully and with great attention, as though you were spreading with your voice and hand the divine words to your brethren, in front of the King of all – Christ.

The aim of fasting is to purify the body; strengthen the soul, elevate the will for the greater glory of almighty God.

Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to follow the example with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.

The wise man is satisfied to be right; the fool must prove others wrong.

An Orthodox Christian home should be a special kind of home. It should reflect the reverence for human beings that comes from Christian teaching about the dignity and value of human personality; it should be a home where people live in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, and ever remain in love and peace together.



EDITORS' NOTES

Lent is the season in the Church's year when by prayer – and especially fasting – Christians clear space, time, commitments and empty all their reasonable expectations of fulfillment in order that God may fill them with His Love and His Grace.

The Vespers on Forgiveness Sunday (March 1) give us instructions on how we are to observe the Lent. It ends with the wish that we may live to see the passion of Christ and then rejoice in His resurrection. It is a pious custom among Orthodox to ask others to pray for them so that they live to see another Pascha. This is usually done after the Lenten Services.

We hear the following at the Vesper Service, "Let us begin the fast with joy! Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts! Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh! Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food! Let us rejoice in virtue of the spirit and fulfill them in love, that we may see the passion of Christ our God, and rejoice in spirit at the Holy Pascha!"

Have you given your list of departed to your priest? Their names will be read at the Soul Saturdays on March 14, 21, and 28 and then on June 6.

There are so many special services, etc. during this month that it was impossible to fit them all in. Among these are the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete, St. Ephrem's Prayer, the Annunciation, the Acafist, Cross Sunday, ikons, anathemas, etc. Oh for more space.

The Church faces monumental challenges today. Advances in communication, and the rapid transportation of people and goods have eliminated many traditional barriers. Ideas, designer clothes and deadly viruses travel everywhere. The stability of the Church is undermined. How sad to receive news of actions which we thought were abandoned over sixty years ago, when locking church doors and "putting priests' suitcases on the front porch" were viewed with horror by many of the faithful who left the church as they could not reconcile this type of behavior with the teachings of the church. Let's not get so caught up in who is boss that the institution of the church is put before the Church which teaches love, peace and compassion. As we pray on the Vespers, "Let us rejoice in virtue of the spirit and fulfill them in love."

Pray for us that we may live to see the passion of Christ and rejoice in His resurrection.

The Stroyens

ETHNIC CHUCKLE

Dorohaya Tyotya Mareea,

Yak tam kolo vas. Toot yah taka busy doing nech zhe yah uzhe many months vam neh pesala. Yah dumam zhe bullo lepche kolee me malee schedules. Me pralee shatya Ponodelyok, ironovalee nah Tuesday, pekli hlib nah Wednesday eh tak dalyeh. Teper me mayem so many time saving machines yak automatic clothes washer ee dryer, micro wave ee tak zhe me neh stayuyem doma so much. Me teper eedem nah shopping mall. A tam me kupem ee kupem. Me shitke mayem barz mnoho shatya u nashem closeti. So much zhe mozhem dress up chelo sello. E mayem dosta canned, frozen ee convenience food zhe mozhem yeasti chelee rek. Noh me anyway edem nah mall, day after day. Toh me calling "mall mania."

Vchera yah dostala takee bad case mall mania. Yah tak hotchelea kupete shoska. Yah dumam zhe buduy bratee bus ee buduy enjoy mayself. No me staree asked me: "Where you going?" Yah answered: "I think I"ll go to the mall. I need some exercise. I think I'll walk around a bit." He asked, "You want me to drive you?" Yah kazhu, "No dear, you watch the football rerun on TV. I'll manage."

Yah got dressed – a tam tot husband standing ready to go with me. A kolee me got to mall yah neh mohla get rid of him. Yah gave him suggestions – sit talk to the other men waiting for their wives, go for a fast walk, we need light bulbs go buy some and we'll meet here. Nech neh working ohn sticking so close yah dumam zhe scrazyou. Finally yah decided zhe yah will buy something no matter. A ohn kazhee: "You don't need that. That's too expensive."

Toh yah gave up ee said: "I'm finished, let's go to the grocery store." A tam not much better. Ohn hounding me footsteps. Yah couldn't get rid of him. Yah znam zhe ohn taking things out of me cart kolee yah turned me back. Not much fun shopping today!

Yak riding doma yah said: "Let's stop for a bite." A ohn asked: "Why?" A yah answered sweetly: "Boh we don't have anything to eat." Yah dumala zhe ohn budey matee heart attack ohn tak – kretchet: "Nothing to eat! What did I just spend $67.49 for?" Who you planning to give that food to the food bank?"

Well, me peeshlee domu, tam malee sandwich ee polevkoo, ee tried to find room in cupboard ee freezer for groceries.

Well, tyotya Maree, teper kolee yah a little cooled off yah mozhu van povestee something. No neh tell me husband. Yah dumam zhe yah mam some kind of buying disease.

Budte zdrove,
Hanya

PRESS FUND

It is said that no man is an island unto himself. We know that this is true in publishing of this paper. Without your help and words of encouragement, we could not continue. A big Thank you/Spasebo to all.

Allen Lucas, Dcn. Alex Krafchak, Anna Wentovich, Anne Krawetz, Mary Kochmaruk, Irene Allen, Dr. Dimitrios Pappas, John Glagola, Apollo and Elizabeth Manchuk, Peter Shakula, Vera Yurchak, Helen Cudlic, Frank Romanick, Donald Belinsky, Nicholas Sagan, Peter and Vera Croitoru, Anne Pruski, Mildred Skubanicz, Sophie Nahorniak, Harry and Rose Kulick, Ted and Tina Thamel, John A. Speck, Helen Macko, Nikolaj Karpowitsch, Ruth Morris, Mary Chupak, Patricia Pavelchak, Carol Fotos, Anne Dorozynski, Lew Gogol, Andrew and Dorothy Fedetz, Pauline Petronek, Ann Yacos, Ethel Watlock, Julia Yurkowski, John Russian, Michael Spirnak, Helen Karas. Anonymous for Father and Matushka's continued good health and good work. Rita Wrobel for health. Paul and Marion Stenko in memory of Uncle Jack and Aunt Olga (Kowalchik) Chukalochak. **Helen Cudlic** in memory of her husband George and daughter Nancy. **Steve and Lenora Evancho** for memory of their parents – Sulin and Evancho, Betty Evancho Hively, Mary Grisak Noe, Helen Kichera, Madeline Charitonovich, Irene Tus, Protodcn Paul Yova and for health of Claudia Sulin, Joseph and Ann Plefka, Father Paul and Matushka Shafran on their 50th wedding anniversary and for Father and Matushka Stroyen.

* * * * * *

Blessed is he that expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.

* * * * * *

An optimist is one who makes the best of it when he gets the worst of it.



When we visited in Kiev, we were given some garlic buns with our borsch. Several years later, we were served the garlic buns with mushroom soup at a home of a relative in Uzhorod. Garlic buns (Pampushky z chesnykom) seem strange except for those who enjoy garlic bread. I have given a recipe for the buns but you can make them from frozen bread dough.

(PAMPUSHKY Z CHESNYKOM)
GARLIC BUNS

1 cup warm water	1 teas. salt
1 envelope dry yeast	2 Tbls. oil
2 Tbls. sugar	3 cloves garlic or
3 cups flour	garlic salt

Dissolve yeast in warm water, add sugar, and allow to foam. Combine flour, salt, oil and yeast mixture and knead into dough. Place in a lightly oiled bowl, turn once, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise until double in bulk. Punch down. Pinch off small pieces of dough, roll between lightly oiled palms into 1 inch balls and place on floured towel. Peel garlic and mash with salt. Heat at least 2 inches of oil until hot but not smoking. An electric skillet is good. Drop in dough balls, fry on all sides. Remove and drain on paper towels or brown bags. Roll in mashed garlic salt or sprinkle with garlic salt.

NOTES: Try roasted garlic.

If you have a bread machine, use it to knead and rise. Remove from machine and make buns.

THE ORTHODOX HERALD
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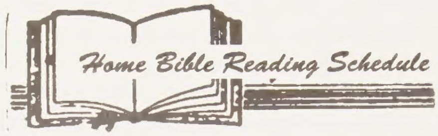
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MARCH 1998

1. **Matt 6:14-21**
2. Proverbs 1:1-20
3. Proverbs 1:20-33
4. Proverbs 2:1-22
5. Proverbs 3:1-18
6. Proverbs 3:19-34
7. Matt 2:23-3:5
8. **John 1:43-51**
9. Proverbs 3:34-4:22
10. Proverbs 5:1-15
11. Proverbs 5:15-6:3
12. Proverbs 6:3-20
13. Proverbs 6:20-7:1
14. Matt 1:35-44
15. **Mark 2:1-12**
16. Proverbs 8:1-21
17. Proverbs 8:32-9:11
18. Proverbs 9:12-18
19. Proverbs 10:1-22
20. Proverbs 10:31-11:2
21. Matt 2:14-17
22. **Mark 8:34-9:1**
23. Proverbs 11:19-12:6
24. Proverbs 12:8-22
25. Proverbs 12:23-13:9
26. Proverbs 13:20-14:6
27. Proverbs 14:15-26
28. Matt 7:31-37
29. **Matt 9:17-31**
30. Proverbs 14:27-15:4
31. Proverbs 15:7-19

BIBLE STUDY

On the first Sunday of Lent - March 8th - Sunday of Orthodoxy we read from John 1:43-51. The reading stresses that our Orthodoxy is a result of Christian witness and that we know Christ because others have kept the faith in an unbroken chain down through the centuries. To be a link in this chain is the mission of each of us. A non-witnessing Orthodox by his inaction is allowing his link to rust away. How much rusting of how many links will it take for the chain to break?

The second Sunday - March 15 - in honor of Gregory Palamas we read from Mark 2:1-12. Surely there is no stranger way of meeting Jesus than this! To be let down through a hole ripped in the roof. There is the knocking and the banging, and the chips of plaster falling on the heads of people jam-packed in the room where Jesus was; and then a ray of sunshine breaks in; and then down comes a cot, swinging and swaying on the ropes lowering it, and on it lay the helpless man, shaking with the palsy and unable to rise. His friends were determined that he should see Jesus. And because of their persistent faith, Jesus healed that man in body and soul. Sometimes a person cannot help himself to meet Jesus. He is too weak to make it alone. Someone must help him or he will never get there. That is when he needs the untiring faith and persistence of his friends. There may be someone who needs your help right now.

The third Sunday - March 22 - the Veneration of the Cross we read from Mark 8:34-9:1. The "Cross" in Christ's day was a disgrace. It was a wooden beam upon which enemies of society were punished and killed. There was nothing romantic or attractive about it. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor 1:23) that the cross was "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness." In other words, to take up the "cross" was not an act for which one was applauded by the world. It still has its reproach; it still has its pain; it still has its unpopularity. But the follower of Christ, who takes up the cross, knows that there is no reward without responsibility, and no crown without a cross. So he takes up His cross, not just in duty, but in love, and carries it with His Saviour.

The fourth Sunday - March 29 - in honor of St. John of the Ladder, we read from Mark 9:17-31. The disciples had failed to cure a young boy. His disciples asked Him: "Why couldn't we cast it off?" Jesus answered: "There is no other way of casting out this sort but by prayer and fasting." Jesus' patience is nearly exhausted at this failure. He declares to the boy's father: Everything is possible to one who has faith." After a third exhibition of unbelief, Christ took the boy by the hand, and he stood up. In answer to the disciples who were troubled by their failure, Jesus now makes it clear that only a faith that results from prayer and fasting can be adequate for life's toughest challenges; this means a life in close contact with God, the source of all power for man. Why do we all too frequently fail? Pray – not just "try prayer" as is often glibly said, is the reason.

THE BABAS TAUGHT ME

Baba was fussy and not her usual peaceful self as we left the church after the service of St. Andrew of Crete. I asked her what the problem was and she started to vent. "You call the service Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, giving the service a completely different feeling. We called it Poklone, meaning Prostrations. Now no one does Poklone in church during this service except the priest. We refuse to move into the aisle of the church, where we would have room, but choose to kneel on our kneeler and touch our forehead and then the kneeler instead of doing a Poklone. It has been years since we have pews in our churches, and yet we have never been taught what is right. Poklone make us humble ourselves, giving more meaning to the words of the service."

* * * * * *

Which travels faster, heat or cold? Heat. You can catch a cold.